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Tern season has arrived, and ACF is calling for their protection

Doctors share the best ways to get the most from a bidet

By ANNE D'INNOCENZIO
Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Once considered an oddity in American homes, bidets are becoming increasingly common as more people seek a hygienic and sustainable alternative to toilet paper or a hand managing certain physical conditions.

Toilet paper shortages during the COVID-19 pandemic helped demystify the devices for U.S. consumers, although Italy, Japan and some other countries where bidets are standard bathroom features also saw runs on TP. Environmental awareness, less expensive bidet options and the development of smart toilets that perform multiple functions have given further momentum to the idea of rinsing instead of wiping.

Bidets even earned a moment in the national spotlight last month when Zorhan Mamdani, New York City's new mayor, said he hoped to have them installed in the bathrooms of Gracie Mansion, the 18th century Manhattan home that serves as the official residence of the city's chief executive.

Medical professionals sometimes recommend bidets for patients with hemorrhoids, in recovery from surgery, or who have limited mobility due to age or disabilities. But experts say bidets are not best for everyone and need to be used properly to prevent other problems.

Here are some of the ins and outs to consider.

Bidets for every budget

Bidets use a jet of water to clean the genitals and anal area after someone goes to the bathroom. They originally existed mainly as standalone fixtures separate from toilets.

These days, the options include toilet seat attachments and hand-held versions that resemble detachable shower heads. Many of the latest "smart" toilets come with integrated bidets and feature heated seats, adjustable water pressure and air dryers.

On YouTube and other social media platforms, there are videos demonstrations of how to make a portable bidet with a plastic soda bottle.

A smart bidet sits in a bathroom at the McKechnie Family LIFE Home on the University Illinois campus in Champaign, Ill., Thursday, Dec. 9, 2021.

Associated Press

Proper bidet etiquette

Bidet converts tend to rave about how much cleaner the appliances leave them feeling. Since all toileting activity involves delicate body parts and bacteria, experts stress that correct bidet use is required to make the activity as sanitary as possible.

When using standalone bidets and ones installed on toilets, it's best, especially for women, to turn on the faucet while facing the controls so the washing is done from front to back, according to Dr. David Rivadeneira, a colorectal surgeon with the Huntington Hospital in Huntington, New York.

That position prevents the transfer of bacteria from the anal area to the urethra, Rivadeneira said.

Most doctors recommend using warm water at low pressure for up to a few minutes, avoiding any extreme temperatures. You can also try a gentle soap if desired, but it's usually not necessary for regular bidet users.

Rivadeneira cautions patients against trying to inject water into the anus since the devices are not meant for internal use.

"You're not supposed to be substituting it for a colonic or an enema," he said.

After washing, pat dry with toilet paper or a dedicated cotton towel to remove any remaining stool and to prevent yeast infections, experts say.

Bidets can be used every day but are most appropriate after a bowel movement. Overuse may cause skin irritation, according to medical experts.

Proper bidet maintenance also matters, said Dr. Neal H. Patel, a family physician with the Providence St. Joseph Hospital in Orange County, California. Make sure to wipe down the nozzle every week or two with disinfectant wipes to remove bacteria, he said.

Some benefits of bidets

Dr. Danielle Antosh, a urogynecologist in Houston, said some studies have showed that a bidet leaves less bacteria on a user's hand compared to toilet paper, but the research remains too limited to know for sure.

However, doctors who are in favor of bidets think the devices are less harsh on sensitive skin than toilet paper.

"The texture of toilet paper can cause irritation and itching, while the gentle water stream of a bidet is less abrasive and healthier for the skin," Dr. George Ellis, a urologist in Orlando, Florida, said.

Bidets therefore may benefit people with chronic diarrhea or other conditions that necessitate a lot of wiping, as well as those who are prone to urinary tract infections, medical experts said. They also may help relieve discomfort from hemorrhoids, fistulas and anal fissures, they said.

Three dermatologists from the University of Tennessee Health Science Center wrote in a 2023 editorial in the International Journal of Women's Dermatology that their peers should be "aware of the commonality of bidet use outside of American culture" and comfortable recommending bidets because skin conditions such as eczema, psoriasis and contact dermatitis can occur in the perianal region.

They also argued that by helping people with physical limitations clean themselves independently after using the toilet, bidets can reduce the workload of caregivers, most of whom are women.

When to turn away from a bidet

Bidets are another example where it's possible to get too much of a good thing. Some doctors in Japan have advised patients who reported rashes or difficulty controlling their bowels after frequent bottom cleansing to stop using bidets until the conditions cleared up.

Antosh recommends checking with a doctor before using a high-pressure bidet right after childbirth or if you have genital ulcers because powerful streams of water may be irritating.

Dr. Jenna Queller, a dermatologist and founder of Boca Raton, Florida-based DermWorks, said the same was true for people with genital eczema or psoriasis. She recommends moisturizing the areas after using a bidet to prevent irritation..

And while bidets may offer relief for an itchy bottom, always consult a doctor if there's persistent bleeding from fissures or hemorrhoids because you could have a more serious condition, Rivadeneira advises.

The green factor

Bidets generally are recognized as a greener choice than toilet paper by most environmental groups and scientists. The non-profit Natural Resources Defense Council said in a recent report that the devices "significantly cut down on the use of toilet paper, helping to lessen the environmental impacts associated with tissue production."

Gary Bull, a professor emeritus of forestry at the University of British Columbia told The Associated Press in a recent interview that while it makes sense and is agreed bidets are more sustainable, truly knowing the environmental impact of a product requires calculating all the carbon emitted and energy used in making the products and through the end of their life cycles.

Fancier bidets, for example, use electricity to heat the water and seat, he noted.

"I was working out in my own house last night putting in a Japanese bidet because I just came back from Japan, and I went, 'OK, so this is good,'" Bull said. ❑

Landmark trial accusing social media companies of addicting children to their platforms begins

By KAITLYN HUAMANI and BARBARA ORTUTAY
AP Technology Writers

LOS ANGELES (AP) — The world's biggest social media companies face several landmark trials this year that seek to hold them responsible for harms to children who use their platforms. Opening statements for the first, in Los Angeles County Superior Court, begin this week.

Instagram's parent company Meta and Google's YouTube will face claims that their platforms deliberately addict and harm children. TikTok and Snap, which were originally named in the lawsuit, settled for undisclosed sums.

"This was only the first case there are hundreds of parents and school districts in the social media addiction trials that start today, and sadly, new families every day who are speaking out and bringing Big Tech to court for its deliberately harmful products," said Sacha Haworth, executive director of the nonprofit Tech Oversight Project.

A separate trial in New Mexico, meanwhile, was also set to kick off with opening arguments on Monday.

At the core of the Los Angeles case is a 19-year-old identified only by the initials "KGM," whose case could determine how thousands of other, similar lawsuits against social media companies will play out. She and two other plaintiffs have been selected for bellwether trials essentially test cases for both sides to see how their arguments play out before a jury and what damages, if any, may be awarded, said Clay Calvert, a nonresident senior fellow of technology policy studies at the American Enterprise Institute.

It's the first time the companies will argue their case before a jury, and the outcome could have profound effects on their businesses and how they will handle children using their platforms.

Young people use their phones to view social media in Sydney, Nov. 8, 2024.

Associated Press

KGM claims that her use of social media from an early age addicted her to the technology and exacerbated depression and suicidal thoughts. Importantly, the lawsuit claims that this was done through deliberate design choices made by companies that sought to make their platforms more addictive to children to boost profits. This argument, if successful, could sidestep the companies' First Amendment shield and Section 230, which protects tech companies from liability for material posted on their platforms.

"Borrowing heavily from the behavioral and neurobiological techniques used by slot machines and exploited by the cigarette industry, Defendants deliberately embedded in their products an array of design features aimed at maximizing youth engagement to drive advertising revenue," the lawsuit says.

Executives, including Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg, are expected to testify at the trial, which will last six to eight weeks. Experts have drawn similarities to the Big Tobacco trials that led to a 1998 settlement requiring cigarette companies to pay billions in health care costs and restrict marketing targeting minors.

"Plaintiffs are not merely the collateral damage of Defendants' products," the lawsuit says. "They are the direct victims of the intentional product design choices made by each Defendant. They are the intended targets of the harmful features that pushed them into self-destructive feedback loops."

The tech companies dispute the claims that their products deliberately harm children, citing a bevy of safeguards they have added over the years and arguing that they are not liable for content posted on their sites by third parties.

"Recently, a number of lawsuits have attempted to place the blame for teen mental health struggles squarely on social media companies," Meta said in a recent blog post. "But this oversimplifies a serious issue. Clinicians and researchers find that mental health is a deeply complex and multifaceted issue, and trends regarding teens' well-being aren't clear-cut or universal. Narrowing the challenges faced by teens to a single factor ignores the scientific research and the many stressors impacting young people today, like academic pressure, school safety, socio-economic challenges and substance abuse."

A Meta spokesperson said in a recent statement that the company strongly disagrees with the allegations outlined in the lawsuit and that it's "confident the evidence will show our longstanding commitment to supporting young people."

José Castañeda, a Google Spokesperson, said that the allegations against YouTube are "simply not true."

In a statement, he said, "Providing young people with a safer, healthier experience has always been core to our work."

The case will be the first in a slew of cases beginning this year that seek to hold social media companies responsible for harming children's mental well-being.

In New Mexico, opening statements begin Monday for trial on allegations that Meta and its social media platforms have failed to protect young users from sexual exploitation, following an undercover online investigation. Attorney General Raúl Torrez in late 2023 sued Meta and Zuckerberg, who was later dropped from the suit.

Prosecutors have said that New Mexico is not seeking to hold Meta accountable for its content but rather its role in pushing out that content through complex algorithms that proliferate material that can be harmful, saying they uncovered internal documents in which Meta employees estimate that about 100,000 children every day are subjected to sexual harassment on the company's platforms.

Meta denies the civil charges while accusing Torrez of cherry-picking select documents and making "sensationalist" arguments.

The company says it has consulted with parents and law enforcement to introduce built-in protections to social media accounts, along with settings and tools for parents.

A federal bellwether trial beginning in June in Oakland, California, will be the first to represent school districts that have sued social media platforms over harms to children.

In addition, more than 40 state attorneys general have filed lawsuits against Meta, claiming it is harming young people and contributing to the youth mental health crisis by deliberately designing features on Instagram and Facebook that addict children to its platforms. The majority of cases filed their lawsuits in federal court, but some sued in their respective states.

TikTok also faces similar lawsuits in more than a dozen states.

Other countries, meanwhile, are enacting new laws to limit social media for children.

In January, French lawmakers approved a bill banning social media for children under 15, paving the way for the measure to enter into force at the start of the next school year in September, as the idea of setting a minimum age for use of the platforms gains momentum across Europe.

In Australia, social media companies have revoked access to about 4.7 million accounts identified as belonging to children since the country banned use of the platforms by those under 16, officials said. ❑

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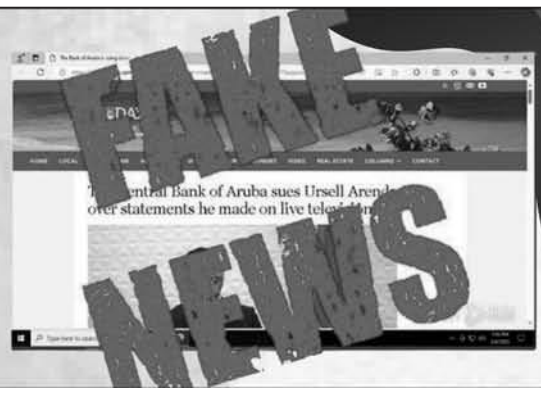


As head of the actors guild, Sean Astin brings a little Rudy, a little Samwise, and a lot of fight

By ANDREW DALTON
AP Entertainment Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Sean Astin has taken on the presidency of the SAG-AFTRA at a particularly perilous time for the actors union, and for Hollywood. There's the threat of human actors being replaced by artificial intelligence. The ongoing upheavals of streaming. Studio consolidation and realignment.

Nearly three years ago, the actors launched a four-month strike, securing some protections and higher wages. And on Monday, negotiations on a new three-year contract with studio and streamers are already beginning again.

SAG-AFTRA president Sean Astin poses for a portrait at his office in Los Angeles on Dec. 19, 2025.
Associated Press

So what actor would want this role?

"In my imagination, growing up, I would want to have been in a place of consequence," he told The Associated Press in an interview in his office at the guild's Los Angeles headquarters. "And so to have the opportunity to be in a role, leading a union of 160,000 people at this moment of consequence when there's turmoil, when there's fear and uncertainty and danger, this is exactly where I want to be."

A life as an actor and union member

Astin, an elected board member during the strike who left his mark as a fiery rally speaker, won the presidency in September, replacing the outgoing Fran Drescher.

As an actor, the now-54-year-old is known as the leader of a scrappy band of kids in 1985's "The Goonies," an aspiring football player with never-ending grit in 1993's "Rudy," and Samwise Gamgee, Frodo Baggins' steadfast bestie in the "Lord of the Rings" trilogy.

He's a SAG lifer, becoming a member as a young boy in 1981. His mother, Oscar winner Patty Duke, who died in 2016, was president of the guild from 1985 to 1988, before it added the -AFTRA in a 2012 merger.

His father, John Astin, now 95, is best known for playing Gomez on "The Addams Family." His brother Mackenzie Astin is a child star turned journeyman actor who recently had a three-episode arc on "The Pitt."

Sean Astin said he hopes to get actors like his brother, who rely heavily on small ongoing payments for guest roles, to have streaming residuals pay as well as they do for broadcast TV.

"I can't wait to be at a Thanksgiving or a Christmas with him and nudge him and say, 'Hey, how's your residuals doing?'" he said.

The coming contract talks

Astin said he has reason to believe the new talks won't start with actors and their employers at each other's throats.

"They came in last time provoking the fight," he said, referring to the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers. "They wanted the strike. No question in my mind. I was in those rooms every single day. They're sending much different signals now. They're sending signals of wanting stability, of wanting to work as partners again."

The AMPTP said in a statement to the AP that the group representing studios and streamers looked "forward to working collaboratively with our partners at SAG-AFTRA as we commence formal bargaining."

"By taking the time to thoughtfully engage on the challenges confronting our industry, we are optimistic that, together, we can reach a fair deal that reflects our shared commitment to supporting our industry's talented performers and promoting long-term stability," the statement said.

Astin said the guild won't yield any of the ground it won in 2023, whether it be wage increases or requiring informed consent for the use of actors' likenesses via AI. and that means they can't disarm in advance striking is not out of the question, whatever the lingering pains from last time.

"There's only one real tool available to a labor union in a negotiation, and that's saying no," Astin said.

"We reserve the right to say no again if we need to."

On March 1, the guild will hold the world's most glamorous union meeting, the newly renamed Actor Awards, where high-profile members like Leonardo DiCaprio and Emma Stone are nominated. But the vast majority of acting members don't even make the approximately $27,000 a year required to qualify for guild health insurance. And Astin represents the guild's full membership including video game actors, puppeteers, broadcast journalists and TV announcers. He's spent much of his time since his election and plenty before that learning the specific concerns of, for example, stunt drivers or actors who live in Minnesota or New Mexico.

"I will say to everybody, I'm gonna fight as hard for you as anybody has ever fought for you, for your issue," he said. "People say, 'You can't fight for everybody equally.' I say, 'Yes, I can.'"

The best parts of his best characters

A speech Samwise gives in "The Two Towers" "There's some good in this world, Mr. Frodo. And it's worth fighting for" became an Astin rallying cry during the strike. He said that he can also draw from his other characters for traits he ought to embody now.

"The qualities that make Rudy special determination, grit, inspiration, aspiration whatever is a part of that thing that makes him, makes his story touch the lives of so many people, is the part of myself that I want to pour into this job on behalf of my members," he said. And then there's Mikey from "The Goonies."

"If you think of 'The Goonies,' 'The Goonies' is about saving their home," he said. "It's fun, there's a pirate ship, but it's about a group of friends who don't want to be overtaken by industrialists. Maybe that's the most important one."❑

In the Arctic, the major climate threat of black carbon is overshadowed by geopolitical tensions

By PETER PRENGAMAN
Associated Press

REYKJAVIK, Iceland (AP) — As rising global temperatures speed up the melting of sea ice in the Arctic Ocean, it's set off a boom of ships taking routes that previously were frozen and not traversable.

The increase in marine Arctic traffic, which received increased attention as President Donald Trump pushed for the United States to take over Greenland, has come with a heavy environmental cost: black carbon, or soot, that spews from ships and makes the ice melt even faster. Several countries are making a case for ships in the Arctic to use cleaner fuels that cause less pollution in meetings this week with international shipping regulators.

An Icebreaker makes the path for a cargo ship with an iceberg in the background near a port on the Alexandra Land island near Nagurskoye, Russia, May 17, 2021.

Associated Press

Glaciers, snow and ice covered in the soot emitted by ships have less ability to reflect the sun. Instead, the sun's heat is absorbed, helping to make the Arctic the fastest warming place on Earth. In turn, melting Arctic sea ice can affect weather patterns around the world.

"It ends up in a never-ending cycle of increased warming," said Sian Prior, lead adviser for the Clean

Arctic Alliance, a coalition of nonprofits focused on the Arctic and shipping. "We need to regulate emissions and black carbon, in particular. Both are completely unregulated in the Arctic."

In December, France, Germany, the Solomon Islands and Denmark proposed that the International Maritime Organization require ships traveling in Arctic waters to use "polar fuels," which are lighter and emit less carbon pollution than the widely used maritime fuels known as residuals. The proposal includes steps that companies would take to comply and the geographic area it would apply to all ships traveling north of the 60th parallel. The proposal was expected to be presented to the IMO's Pollution Prevention and Response Committee this week and possibly another committee in April.

A 2024 ban on using a type of residual known as heavy fuel oil in the Arctic has had only modest impacts so far, partly because of loopholes.

Concerns about shipping pollution are overshadowed by geopolitics

The push to reduce black carbon, which studies have shown has a warming impact 1,600 times that of carbon dioxide over a 20-year span, is happening at a time of conflicting interests, both internationally and among the countries that have coastlines in the Arctic.

In recent months, Trump's periodic comments about the need to "own" Greenland to bolster U.S. security have raised many issues, from Greenland's sovereignty to the future of the NATO alliance. Pollution and other environmental issues in the Arctic have taken a backseat.

Trump, who has called climate change a "con job," has also pushed back against global policies aimed at fighting it. Last year, the IMO was expected to adopt new regulations that would have imposed carbon fees on shipping, which supporters said would have pushed companies to use cleaner fuels and electrify fleets where possible.

Then Trump intervened, lobbying hard for nations to vote no. The measure was postponed for a year, its prospects at best uncertain. Given that, it's hard to see the IMO making fast progress on the current proposal to limit black carbon in the Arctic.

Even inside Arctic nations, which are most impacted by black carbon and other shipping pollution, there are internal tensions around such regulations. Iceland is a good example. While the country is a world leader in green technologies such as carbon capture and the use of thermal energies for heating, conservationists say the country has made less progress on regulating pollution in its seas. That is because the fishing industry, one of the country's most important, holds huge sway.

"The industry is happy with profits, unhappy with the taxes and not engaged in issues like climate or biodiversity," said Arni Finnsson, board chair of the Iceland Nature Conservation Association.

Finnsson added that the costs of using cleaner fuels or electrifying fleets have also prompted resistance.

"I think the government is waking up, but they still have to wait for the (fishing) industry to say yes," he said.

The country has not taken a position on the pending polar fuels proposal. In a statement, Iceland's Ministry of Environment, Energy and Climate said the proposal was "positive with regard to its purpose and basic content," but that further study was needed. The statement added that Iceland supports stronger measures to counter shipping emissions and reduce black carbon.

Arctic ship traffic and black carbon emissions both rise

Soot pollution has increased in the Arctic as cargo ships, fishing boats and even some cruise liners are traveling more in the waters that connect the northernmost parts of Iceland, Greenland, Canada, Russia, Norway, Finland, Sweden and the United States.Between 2013 and 2023, the number of ships entering waters north of the 60th parallel increased by 37%, according to the Arctic Council, an intergovernmental forum made up of the eight countries with territory in the Arctic. In that same period, the total distance traversed by ships in the Arctic increased 111%.

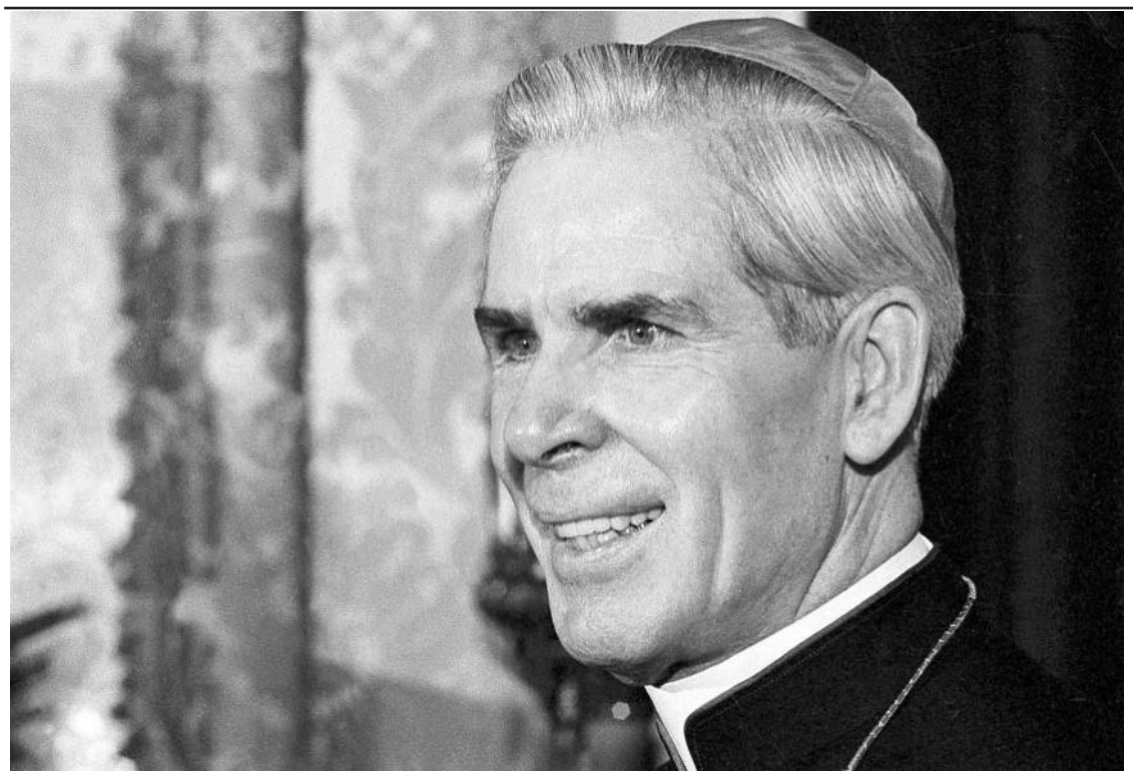
Black carbon emissions have also increased. In 2019, 2,696 metric tons of black carbon was emitted from ships north of the 60th parallel compared with 3,310 metric tons in 2024, according to a study by Energy and Environmental Research Associates. The study found that fishing boats were the biggest source of black carbon.

It also found that the 2024 ban on heavy fuel oil would only result in a small reduction in black carbon. Waivers and exceptions allow some ships to continue using it until 2029.

Environmental groups and concerned countries see regulating ship fuel as the only way to realistically reduce black carbon. That is because getting nations to agree to limit traffic would likely be impossible. The lure of fishing, resource extraction and shorter shipping distances is too great. Ships can save days on some trips between Asia and Europe by sailing through the Arctic.

Still, the path known as the Northern Sea Route is only traversable a few months of the year, and even then ships must be accompanied by icebreakers. Those dangers, combined with Arctic pollution concerns, have driven some companies to pledge to stay away at least for now.

"The debate around the Arctic is intensifying, and commercial shipping is part of that discussion," wrote Søren Toft, CEO of Mediterranean Shipping Company, the world's largest container shipping company, in a LinkedIn post last month. "Our position at MSC is clear. We do not and will not use the Northern Sea Route."❑



This Oct. 26, 1966 file photo shows Bishop Fulton J. Sheen in his office at the Propagation of Faith in New York.

Associated Press

Vatican again OKs Archbishop Fulton Sheen beatification after 2019 ceremony derailed at last minute

By NICOLE WINFIELD
Associated Press

ROME (AP) — The Vatican has given the green light, again, to beatify Archbishop Fulton Sheen, the popular U.S. radio and TV preacher whose path to sainthood was derailed first by a lengthy court battle over his remains and then by concerns about how he handled clergy sexual misconduct cases.

After a rare six-year delay to investigate the concerns, Sheen's beatification can now take place in Peoria, Ill., as originally planned, the Peoria diocese announced Monday.

No new date for the ceremony, the last major step before possible sainthood, was immediately announced. But the Vatican's approval now sets the stage for the Illinois-born Sheen to be beatified during the pontificate of the Illinois-born Pope Leo XIV.

"The Holy See has informed me that the cause for the Venerable Servant of God Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen can proceed to beatification," Peoria Bishop Louis Tylka said in a written and video statement on the websites of the diocese and the Sheen foundation. "We are working with the Dicastery of the Causes of Saints at the Vatican to determine the details for the upcoming beatification."

Sheen was an enormously effective evangelizer in the 20th century U.S. church, who in some ways pioneered televangelism with his 1950s television series, "Life is Worth Living." According to Catholic University of America, where he studied and taught before he was made a bishop, Sheen won an Emmy Award, was featured on the cover of Time Magazine "and became one of the most influential Catholics of the 20th century."

Pope Francis had confirmed a miracle attributed to Sheen's intercession on July 6, 2019 and had set his beatification for Dec. 21 that year in Peoria. But with less than three weeks' notice, the Vatican postponed the ceremony indefinitely.

It acted after the diocese of Rochester, N.Y., where Sheen served as bishop from 1966-1969, asked for further investigation into Sheen's tenure and "his role in priests' assignments."

The concerns focused on Sheen's handling of two cases of priests accused of sexual misconduct. Sheen was never accused of abuse himself. A top canonical affairs official from Peoria, Monsignor James Kruse, said in 2019 that an investigation had cleared Sheen of any wrongdoing. Kruse later complained that the Rochester diocese was "sabotaging" the cause, writing a lengthy essay that had been posted on the official Sheen beatification site but later taken down.

Peoria Bishop Tylka's statement made no reference to the concerns that prompted the delay in 2019.

The 2019 investigation was the latest obstacle to hinder Sheen's cause, coming after an expensive, years-long legal battle between Sheen's relatives in Peoria and the New York City archdiocese over his final resting place.

Among those celebrating the Vatican's new green light to beatify Sheen was The Pontifical Missions Societies in the U.S., the Vatican's main missionary fundraising office in the U.S., which Sheen headed from 1950-1966. Sheen left most of his patrimony, including writings and audio recordings, to the organization, which raises money for the Catholic Church in Africa, Asia, Latin America and other mission areas. ❑

Somalia welcomes its first bowling alley as the middle class and diaspora returnees grow

By OMAR FARUK
Associated Press

MOGADISHU, Somalia (AP) — In a city long defined by conflict, Somalia 's capital of Mogadishu now echoes with the crash of pins at the country's first modern bowling alley.

It's the latest sign of revival in the once-thriving Indian Ocean port shaped by 35 years of civil war and militant bombings. Millions of people were forced to flee what became one of the world's most dangerous cities. Those who remained avoided public spaces as the al-Qaida-linked group al-Shabab waged an insurgency against the Somali state.

In recent years, improved security measures against al-Shabab, an expanded government presence and growing private investment have allowed daily life to re-emerge. Cafes line newly reopened streets, beaches draw evening crowds and traffic congestion, once unimaginable, now clogs key intersections.

The Feynuus Bowling Center opened last year and draws many locals and Somalis returning from the diaspora, who bring investment and business ideas after years of sending billions of dollars in remittances from abroad.

On a recent evening, young Somalis gathered in groups, laughing and filming each other on their phones while music played. Many from the diaspora are visiting Mogadishu for the first time in years, or the first time ever.

"I couldn't believe Mogadishu has this place," said Hudoon Abdi, a Somali-Canadian on holiday, as she prepared to take her turn to bowl.

"I'm enjoying it. Mogadishu is actually safe," she said, urging others to visit.

Mogadishu remains vulnerable to militant attacks, however, with security measures like checkpoints and heavily guarded zones part of daily life. Non-Somalis remain largely confined to a compound at the international airport.

But residents say the ability to gather for recreation signals an important psychological shift. Such venues provide a welcoming environment for a younger generation eager for safe spaces to socialize.

Abukar Hajji returned from the United Kingdom on holiday after many years away and found the difference between what he imagined and what he experienced eye-opening.❑

People bowl at the Feynuus Bowling Center in Mogadishu, Somalia, on Jan. 15, 2026.

Associated Press

Aruba's neighborhoods; the meaning behind their names

Just like any other country, Aruba has unique and beautifully named neighborhoods that all form a part of its culture and development. Many of these names have a historical background and meaning that teaches us about the island and its rich culture every day.

With this series, we want to take you on a journey of discovery, where you'll learn not only the beautiful names but the history behind it that gives it life and meaning.

Anabui/Tierra Del Sol
This neighborhood can be seen on Van Raders map and Werbata as Anna Boei. Anna Boei is a name of which there isn't much information about its origin.

The best historians were able to deduce is that this name came to be because of a miscommunication between Van Spengler and the natives who were living on the island. In the Arawak/Taino language one can find the word Anaiboa, which consists of Ana meaning flower or the best and Iboa; the juice of a cassava, which together would mean "the best juice of a cassava".

If one assumes that the actual word heard was Ana-boio instead, consisting of Ana meaning the best and Boio (bohio); house, the iteration of Anabui would mean "the best house." This is the origin that has been more or less speculated and assumed for the word Anabui and its meaning.

During the Second World War and later, this area was used as a terrain for training of shooting by militia and later on Korps Mariniers (the marines of Aruba). By the end of the previous century a large part of Anabui was developed to have luxurious villas and a golf course, which lead to it getting the name Tierra Del Sol, Spanish for Land of the Sun. The name is not an official name, but the name of the development project that took place. It is hoped that the original and 'old' name of Anabui is never lost and now it will be remembered by both locals and tourists.

Angochi
This name can be seen on the Werbata map with little and cursive letters. It is the unofficial name for the area given by a tenant to the land that was rented to him.

The biggest probability that historians believe is that it comes from native descent, during the time in the 19th century where Mestizos still lived on Aruba. The name can't really be explain and according to books on its history seems to be more of a sign of corruption.

However, it seems to come from combining A(n), which is a generalizing prefix and Goeiza, which means 'the spirit of a living man'. Angochi remains more of a guess.❑

This neighborhood's abbreviation is; An.

Dining in? Try making some local favorites!

How to make "funchi"

(Oranjestad)—One of the most famous Aruban snacks or appetizers is "funchi hasa" (fried polenta sticks), a super easy meal that adults and children will both enjoy. Here's how to make it!

Before we start, get to know the basics
What is funchi hasa? Funchi, or Aruban polenta, is a popular side dish for local dishes, like soups, stews and fried fish. Made from a corn flour, water and butter mixture, this appetizer is traditionally eaten alongside a warm meal. However, locals also like to fry sticks of funchi for a quick and filling snack.

Ingredients (measured by heart)
1. Polenta flour/Funchi flour
2. Water
3. Butter
4. Salt to taste

Directions
Bring water to a boil in a medium-sized sauce pan. Add in some salt and butter to taste in the boiling water and let this dissolve and melt. Then, gradually add the flour while stirring with a wooden spoon. The mixture will start to begin to harden pretty fast, so be careful not to add too much. At this phase of cooking, you want a goopy thick mixture, but thin enough so you can continue to stir to get all the lumps out.

After reaching a semi-firm, yet flexible texture, grab a baking pan or any large, deep plate, and pour the mixture in. Be sure that this plate is wet or greased so that the mixture does not stick to the bottom. Let this cool completely while it firms up for the last time. Once it's cooled you can enjoy it as is, topped with some butter or shredded cheese. Or, you can take it to another level of deliciousness.

When your funchi is firm enough, cut it into strips (size is up to you). Heat up some oil in a pan and fry those babies up! After frying, you can top it with some cheese or enjoy it with your favorite dipping sauce.❑

Photo credit of fried funchi sticks: Jacqueline Felida on Pinterest.

Po-Ké Ono Brings Bold Asian Fusion to Aruba's Dining Scene

Innovative eatery blends island culture with modern Asian cuisine

In a culinary landscape known for its diversity and creativity, Po-Ké Ono stands out as a vibrant and contemporary addition to Aruba's restaurant scene. With locations at Azure in Palm Beach and the Renaissance Marketplace in Oranjestad, the concept introduces a refreshing take on Asian fusion dining—casual in style, yet refined in execution.

Established in 2020, Po-Ké Ono was envisioned as a space where flavor, culture, and creativity intersect. The menu features an array of signature dishes including poke bowls, steamed bao, and sushi, crafted with precision and a focus on freshness. Drawing on Asian influences, the restaurant delivers bold flavors in an approachable format, appealing to a broad audience of locals and visitors alike.

The ambiance is designed to be welcoming and relaxed, with a philosophy centered around accessibility and enjoyment. Whether dining indoors or grabbing a quick bowl on the go, guests can expect a consistently high standard in both service and cuisine. With extensive menu options, including selections for vegan diners, Po-Ké Ono caters to a wide range of tastes and dietary preferences.

While the concept leans into fast-casual dining, the quality of ingredients and thoughtful

preparation reflect fine-dining roots. Many of the restaurant's core ingredients are sourced locally, emphasizing sustainability and support for Aruba's agricultural community. The result is a dining experience that honors both the island's spirit and the culinary traditions it draws inspiration from.

Open daily from 11:00 AM to 10:00 PM, Po-Ké Ono continues to gain recognition as one of the island's premier destinations for sushi, poke, and bao. Its growing popularity is a testament to Aruba's evolving food culture—one that embraces global influence while staying rooted in community and craft.

For those seeking a modern taste of Asia in the heart of the Caribbean, Po-Ké Ono offers a flavorful and memorable experience worth exploring.❑

Feeling parched? Grab refreshment by the side of the road!

(Oranjestad)—Touring the island in the blistering heat can leave one feeling rather thirsty and looking to cool off. Luckily there are a few stands along the roads of Aruba that can offer you just what you need: a nice, refreshing beverage!

These "coconut stands" can be found at several locations on the island, where you can cool off with delicious smoothies, drinks, snacks, and of course, fresh coconuts! Perfect during family outings around the island, these stands can be found in the following locations:

- Near the red Anchor in San Nicolas
- On the Linear Park in Oranjestad (in front of airport runway)
- At the California Light House hill
- Bushiribana Gold Mill Ruin
- Bushiribana Beach

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Shalom Body & Soul Spa | Moments & Memories Jewelry
Magnet Perfume Jewelry & Cosmetics | The Lazy Lizard
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Tern season has arrived, and ACF is calling for their protection

(ORANJESTAD)—Aruba has begun to see terns arriving along its coast to start their breeding season once again. An event that happens every year, the migration of terns to our island normally begins in March, but this year it was observed that they were already present as early as January.

In Aruba, there are ten different species of terns that normally breed from March to September every year. However, ACF has noted that this year their arrival came earlier, and by the end of January a presence of terns was already being seen in their breeding areas. During this season, ten different species breed at different times. This is the reason why the season lasts for more than half a year.

The terns breed mainly in the Baby Beach area and along the north coast of Aruba. Baby Beach is a particularly special site for terns, since this is where they carry out their reproduction rituals. Referred to as a "discotheque" by Natasha Silva, the point of Baby Beach near the open water is where a large group of terns spends the season searching for their partner—for life—to reproduce.

Terns are very fragile and easily disturbed, especially during their reproduction rituals.

Their nests are divided into two specific sites on our island. The first is the reefs near the refinery in San Nicolas. These reefs become home to the terns, where they lay their nests either on the sand or in the small bushes around the reefs. These reefs are "off-limits" to the public; one of the only areas in Aruba that is completely protected by law.

The terns also lay eggs along the north coast of our island, between cliffs and rocks throughout the area. This is where they are vulnerable to greater danger, according to ACF. Among these cliffs, everything is well camouflaged and cannot easily be seen, even by people who are walking or driving vehicles over the rocks.

The chicks have a natural behavior to "freeze" in place when they sense danger. This puts them at risk of being stepped on. For this reason, ACF is making a call to the community and authorities to help protect our historic birds.

As general advice, ACF says to keep distance and be cautious when passing through areas where terns are breeding. "If a tern starts screaming at you, that is a sign that you are too close to their nest and eggs," Silva explained. These are the types of signals the Aruba community needs to be aware of.

So once again, a call goes out to the entire community of Aruba: Let's protect our terns during an important season for them. Educate yourself and others about the birds, stay alert to harmful activities near nests, and share information with ACF if you notice anything unusual in nature. Together we can care for and strengthen our nature, and that begins with education.

Aruba Conservation Foundation (ACF) can be reached by phone at 585-1234 or by email at info@acf.aw ❑

Enjoy one of the best views on Aruba at the top of the Hooiberg Hill

(Oranjestad)—If you are a regular hiker, or maybe want to spice up your morning work out session, then you might enjoy one of the most popular climbing sites on the island: The Hooiberg Hill. Accompanied with a 600-step staircase, this hill overlooks a great part of the island, the Caribbean sea, and sometimes even the Santa Anna mountain located in the coastal state of Falcon in Venezuela, providing one of the best views you can get on Aruba.

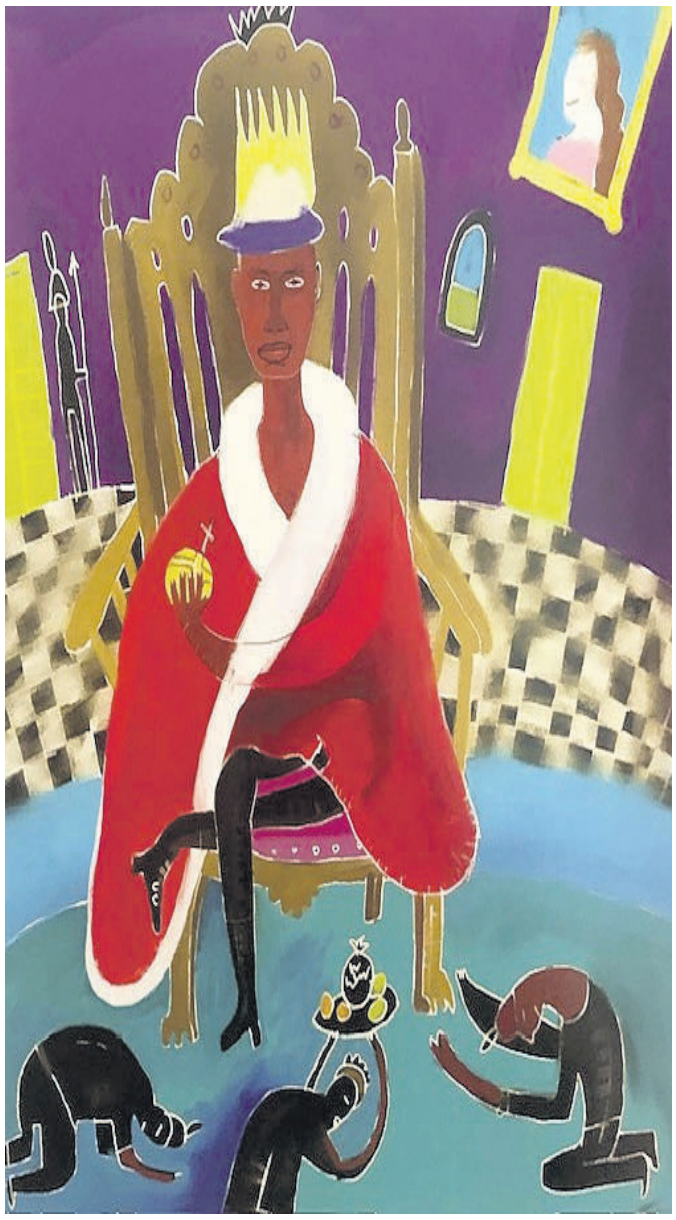
located at the center district of the island, Santa Cruz, the Hooiberg Hill is the second highest point on the island at 165 meters above sea level (or about 540 feet above sea level). The highest point is Jamanota Hill at 189 meters (620 feet), located in the Arikok National Park.

The staircase that run on the side of the hill was first built in 1951, when Mr. Eduardo Tromp constructed it. At that time, the staircase consisted of 900 steps.

Over time, as the steps faced erosion, the government decided to renovate these stairs in 1991. This new project delivered the newer staircase with only 587 steps. However, don't be fooled—it may still be a work out to get on top. In addition, there is now a gazebo placed halfway up the stair for a little rest. The view at this resting stop is also a sight to see.

The best time to climb the hill would be early in the morning or right before sunset, as it may not be as hot. However, the hill is of course open all day, every day.❑

The stories of "Compa Nanzi"



(Oranjestad)—The most popular character you may hear about in the Caribbean is Anansi, known locally on Aruba as "Compa Nanzi". Local children grew up hearing the tales of the conniving spider, and his legacy forms part of the oral narrative tradition that is common in Aruba.

Although the stories are most popular in the Caribbean, "Compa Nanzi" is not entirely unknown globally, especially not in the West African region. Brought to the "new world" by enslaved Africans from Ghana, the historical thread of how Nanzi was introduced on Aruba follows the enslaved Africans in Curacao during the colonial era, which saw the biggest population of enslaved Africans in the Dutch Caribbean.

The stories of Compa Nanzi were a sign of hope for freedom among the slaves, who passed around different stories involving the famous spider through word of mouth, due to not being able to express their native culture in the new world. These stories were a way to not only preserve their culture, but it acted as a medium for relief during the harsh treatment to which they were subjected to.

It wasn't until the end of the nineteenth century that the stories of Nanzi were written down in different languages. However, not all stories are completely alike in every country, as is the risk of oral story telling. However, one thing will always be dominant in Compa Nanzi's stories: his sneaky ways to get what he wants!

How Nanzi fooled the king

One day Nanzi was taking a stroll near the castle of Shon Arei, the king. He had this sudden urge to walk in. He didn't think too much about it and committed to what he had in mind. It was a warm afternoon, and the castle personnel were taking their afternoon nap. Even the soldier guarding the castle door was fast asleep, snoring so loud that his beard bounced up and down on his chin. Nanzi just slipped past him, looked back for a moment then walk right on in.

Nanzi stumbled upon the king's quarters. With all his excitement he sat in the king's throne, and put on his crown that was hanging on the side of the throne. It was very hot that day, and it wasn't long until Nanzi too fell asleep, right there on the king's throne. He was so deep in sleep and snoring so loud, that even when the king found him in his seat, Nanzi did not even notice.

Shon Arei was flabbergasted by the sight of Nanzi on his throne, wearing his crown. How disrespectful! "Soldiers, get him!" he commanded. Nanzi was sound asleep, but when the soldiers picked him up, he jumped from fright. By then though, the soldier already had him in their hold.

"Put him in a sack, stitch it up and throw him in the ocean!" the king said furiously. Two soldiers immediately entered the chamber, took the crown off Nanzi's head and pushed him in a sack.

Nanzi was terrified; it looks like this time he won't get away with his schemes. To get to the ocean, the soldier walked a long distance, and where beginning to feel very thirsty. Luckily they passed by a pub, and decided to have a nice cold beer. They set the sack with Nanzi in it outside and went to enjoy the refreshments. Nanzi was still trembling with fear in the sack.

What is that he hears? A herd of sheep walking by?

"Compadre, listen here!" Nanzi screamed as loud as he could. The sheep herder got close to the sack. "What is this?"

"Man, there is something very beautiful in here that you can see. It's very rare and strange, but indeed, there is something so beautiful in here that you've never seen or will ever see," Nanzi told the herder.

The herder, very dumb, believed Nanzi's word. "Let me see!" he said.

"Well if you must insist," Nanzi said, "I'll let you take a look, but only for a quick second." The herder opened the sack, and Nanzi immediately jumped out. Before the herder could even take a look into the sack, Nanzi pushed him in it, and the herder fell head first in.

Nanzi didn't waste any time, and closed off the sack real tight. He then picked up the herder's hat and starting walking behind the traveling sheep as if nothing happened. After a little while, the soldiers headed back outside to continue their journey. As they picked up the sack, the poor herder started screaming to let him out, but the soldiers ignored him, thinking it was Nanzi.

Shon Arei went strolling a while later. He thought to himself: "This time Nanzi could not get away with his foolishness. He probably drowned in that sack ages ago." That is why, when he saw Nanzi walk behind the herd of sheep on the street, he was flabbergasted again. "Nanzi! Aren't you suppose to be at the bottom of the ocean floor?"

"I was, Your Majesty," Nanzi replied. But you know what; there are so many things to see down there in the sack! Like this herd of sheep. Seeing that they had no herder, I started walking behind them and gained their trust pretty quickly. At the bottom of the ocean there are so many wonderful things, like diamonds, and bags of gold. Chests of silver and other precious stones," Nanzi told the king.

"What is that you say?" the king was intrigued. "I want to see it too!"

The king immediately demanded to his soldiers to be put in a sack and be placed in the ocean. Naturally, Shon Arei died because of this. He was never found again. Nanzi followed the soldier back to the castle, where sat once again on the late king's thrown and put his crown on. He took possession of all of Shon Arei's belongings, and lived the rest of his life as king.

Story and pictures are from "Kon Nanzi a Nek Shon Arei (i otro kuentanan antiano di e araña sabi)" by Nilda Pinto.

Up for a snorkeling adventure in Aruba? Top 3 shipwrecks to explore

(ORANJESTAD) – Aruba is not only the perfect vacation destination to sit back and relax on the sandy beaches but also has great snorkeling spots for passionate adventurers to explore. On the coast of the island, there are various shipwrecks that have become fan-favorites over the years. Here are the top 3 shipwrecks you should explore.

SS Antilla

Dubbed "The Ghost Ship", SS Antilla is the biggest and most visited shipwreck site off the coast of the island. Located in Malmok, this 400-foot ship's story is one of capture and sabotage during WWII.

After Germany invaded The Netherlands, Dutch authorities ordered the confinement of the ship's German crew, who were ported in Aruba because it needed to find a neutral port. The Dutch ordered the ship to be confiscated, but the German crew had other plans. Taking advantage of a delay caused by an anticipated armed resistance, the Germans started scuttling the ship, opening her seacock and setting her ablaze.

Eventually, the crew was arrested, but SS Antilla could not be saved by the Dutch forces. The Dutch fired two rounds of their 35mm gun aboard the 'Aruba' at SS Antilla and left her to sink.

The shipwreck can only be reached by boat. The ship is visible from the surface and during your snorkeling trip you'll be surrounded by hundreds of tropical fishes, but the shipwreck alone is already impressive enough.

SS Pedernales

Like the Antilla, the story of SS Pedernales dates to WWII. Pedernales was used as a lake tanker between Venezuela and Aruba, and sailed under British Flag. At this time, The US and Britain were using Aruba and Curacao as fuel stations for the war ships.

Under operation Neuland (disruption of British and American oil sources), Germany fleets bombed Pedernales. The ship was later cut into three sections, two of which were taken to the US for reconstruction. The remaining part stayed in Aruba and was used as target practice. Eventually, the ship became a snorkeling site that has attracted many visitors throughout the years.

Pedernales lies on the north-west coast of Aruba, and is no more than 10 feet under water, making it an ideal site for snorkelers and divers of all levels.

Jane Sea Wreck

The Jane Sea Wreck lies near Palm Island at 100 feet underwater. Jane's story is heavily speculated, making her origin a tale of legends.

Launched in 1959, the 190-feet ship was initially called "Blackthorn". Her last owner, S&D Shipping Ltd. named her Jane Sea. Jane was a cement freighter between Venezuela and Aruba.

The story goes that the Jane Sea arrived one day at the Barcadera Harbor, where Aruban customs discovered several tons of cocaine. The ship was confiscated and petitioned went out for her owner to claim her. However, several years went by and no one came forward to claim the ship, so dive operators decided to sink her as an artificial reef. This happened in 1988. Jane Sea earned the nick name Jane C, because of the illicit white powder discovered on board.

Jane is now beautifully overgrown with coral and is home to a diverse set of marine life, like turtles, octopus, crabs and sometimes even nurse sharks.

The stories behind these shipwrecks enriches their exploration and offers snorkelers and divers a glance into the past, as well as the beautiful marine life that have molded these wrecks into their home. So, grab your equipment and discover another side of what Aruba has to offer!

We highly recommend you embark on your adventure with the guide of a professional and be sure to take of yourself and Aruba's precious nature.❑

Aruban legends: Frenchman's Pass

(Oranjestad)—If you ever plan on taking a group tour of the island, you may pass through the Frenchman's Pass in Balashi. The Frenchman's pass (known to locals as "Franse Pas") remains a mysterious—and spooky—road of which its legend is told from generation to generation.

The history of the Frenchman's pass—and how it got its name—dates back to the colonization era, when the French tried to colonize the island, but were met with an angry mob of indigenous settlers, refusing to give up their land. However, as the French were heavily equipped with fire arms, the indigenous settlers began to retreat, and hid away in nearby caves. The French colonizers tried to smoke them out of the caves, but the indigenous settlers ended up inhaling too much smoke and most died in those caves. From then on, this passage was known as Frenchman's Pass, and there have been many accounts of spirits roaming the area of Spanish Lagoon.

There are many ghost stories surrounding this area, but one of the most famous one involves a lonely hitchhiker, trying to find a ride back home in the dark rainy night.

Sometime after trying to hitch a ride home, the man saw a car approaching, appearing almost ghost-like in the rain. However, since he needed a ride real bad, he didn't think twice and jumped in. But to his horror, he noticed that the there was no driver in the front. Paralyzed with fear, he didn't dare to get out, and the car started to move.

When approaching a sharp turn, the hitch hiker braced for impact, but just when he though the car might drive straight off the road and crash, he saw a hand appear out the window and turn the wheel. For the next few turns, the hand appeared again. After having had enough, the man decided to jump out and he ran to Santa Cruz.

Arriving at a nearby bar, he ordered a drink and began to tell everyone about his experience. Everyone grew quiet, because they realized he wasn't some drunk messing around; he was telling the truth.

Sometime later, two men walked into the bar and one of them noticed the hitchhiker. He called out to his buddy and said: "Look, there's the idiot who sat in our car when we were pushing it!"

Source: visitaruba.com

French man's pass is one of the few sites on the island that keeps the locals on their toes. While most ghost stories may not have real grounds—or some may even be a set up story for a joke, this pass holds a lot of value to our culture of folkloric story-telling. ❑

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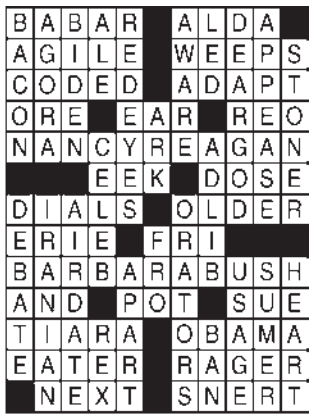
CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

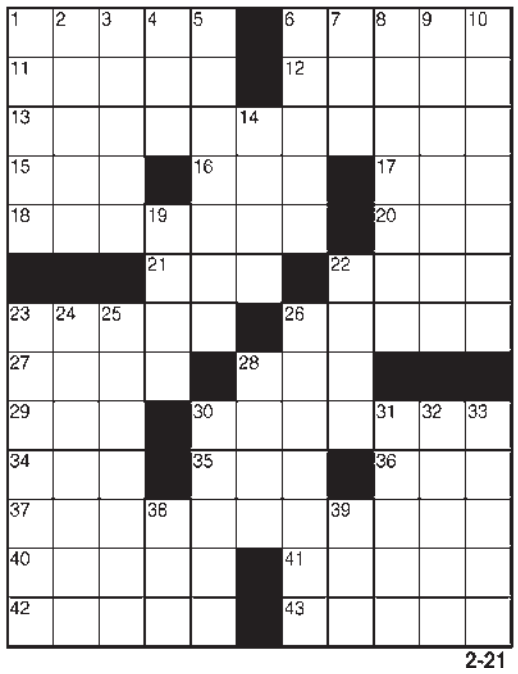


ACROSS

1 Rot
6 Played a role
11 Wed in haste
12 Baseball's Joe
13 Ladder company's base
15 Greek vowel
16 Crooner Tormé
17 Curvy letter
18 Set free
20 Conk out
21 Scoundrel
22 Sweater material
23 Sacred song
26 Ron Weasley's sister
27 Finish last
28 Chips buy
29 Band blaster
30 Monarch's spouse
34 Maiden name label
35 Unoriginal
36 Aussie hopper
37 Planting of trees
40 Beginning
41 Not tight
42 Staggers
43 Layout choices

DOWN

1 Put off
2 Best of the best
3 Reef material
4 Gorilla, for one
5 Polite answer
6 "— of Two Cities"
7 Guest's bed
8 Checked for fit
9 Canyon creator
10 How some areas are populated
14 Exam
19 Writer — Stanley Gardner
22 Costume parts
23 Anticipate
24 Unnamed person
25 Malign
26 Tolkien wizard
28 Nut's partner
30 Sells for
31 Stellar hunter
32 Perch
33 Phone sounds
38 Long fish
39 Overly



2-21

A X Y D L B A A X R
is L O N G F E L L O W

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

2-21 CRYPTOQUOTE

N I W S W U W G O Z E C Z K D I X S V ...

K B T O Z E G B W P A I Z N O Z E N Z E P C

K R D N W G W K P P D I W N Z G P C

P Z Z T X S V K D O Z E . — D I Z Q K B

L W A A W G B Z S

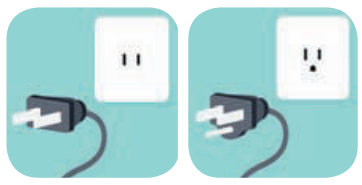
Cryptoquote: LET YOUR HEART FEEL FOR THE AFFLICTIONS AND DISTRESS OF EVERYONE, AND LET YOUR HAND GIVE IN PROPORTION TO YOUR PURSE. — GEORGE WASHINGTON

Cruise ship Schedule: Feb. 9 - 15 2026

			ARR	DEPT	BERTH	
MON	09	MARELLA DISCOVERY 2	08.00	20.00	C	1
TUE	10	MAJESTIC PRINCESS	07.00	18.00	B	1
		SERENADE OF THE SEAS	08.00	23.00	C	1
		OASIS OF THE SEAS	08.00	23.00	I	1
WED	11	BRITANNIA	07.00	18.00	B	1
		CELEBRITY SILHOUETTE	08.00	23.00	C	1
		SEA CLOUD SPIRIT	08.00	14.00	I	1
		FREEWINDS	06.00	****	E	1
THU	12	MS RENAISSANCE	09.00	18.00	B	1
		CARIBBEAN PRINCESS	09.00	22.00	C	1
		CARNIVAL MAGIC	09.00	22.00	I	1
SAT	14	AIDAPERLA	09.00	21.00	C	1
SUN	15	NORWEGIAN PEARL	08.00	17.00	C	1
		FREEWINDS - Dept.	****	22.30	E	-

Helpful tips for your stay on Aruba

(Oranjestad)—When traveling to another country, especially for the first time, it is always better to be over-prepared than under-prepared. That is why we have a list of basicbut important information that we think may come in handy to Aruba's visitors.



Electrical power

Aruba generally operates on 110V to 127V supply voltage and 60Hz. There are also three types of outlets used on the island: type A with two flat prongs; type B with two flat and one grounding prong, and on occasion, type F with two round prong and two earth clips on the side. However, Type A is most commonly found in homes and establishments.

Drinking water

The water that flows through the sinks of every house, hotels and other establishments is distilled and perfectly safe to drink. Aruba's drinking water exceeds WHO's international standards for water quality, so there is no need to buy bottled water from the store.

Safety

Since February 2024, Aruba has been categorized as the safest country in the Caribbean by The Telegraph, and many tourist that visit have often told us how they feel safe to explore the island or walk around at night. However, rare incidents do occurs, so keep yourself and your belongings safe.

SUDOKU

To play sudoku, use logic to fill the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the numbers 1-9 only once. Puzzle difficulty increases from Monday to Sunday.

King Classic Sudoku

		2					3	
9	5		2		3		4	
	3	4						2
3	2				4	6	5	
4		5		3	7			
	7	9	5	2		3	8	4
	8	1						3
2				6	8	4	1	
5			9	7		2		

Difficulty: ★★ 2/10

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Answer to previous puzzle

5	3	4	6	8	1	9	7	2
7	9	1	3	4	2	5	6	8
2	6	8	7	5	9	4	3	1
1	8	9	5	6	3	7	2	4
4	5	2	9	7	8	3	1	6
6	7	3	2	1	4	8	5	9
3	4	7	8	2	6	1	9	5
9	1	6	4	3	5	2	8	7
8	2	5	1	9	7	6	4	3

Difficulty: ★ 2/9

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Minute Maid frozen concentrate orange juice is on display at a grocery store in White Plains, N.Y. on Wednesday, Feb. 4, 2026.
Associated Press

After 80 years, Minute Maid's frozen canned juices are getting put on ice

By DEE-ANN DURBIN
AP Business Writer

Minute Maid helped make orange juice a year-round morning staple in 1946, when it started shipping cans of frozen juice around the U.S.

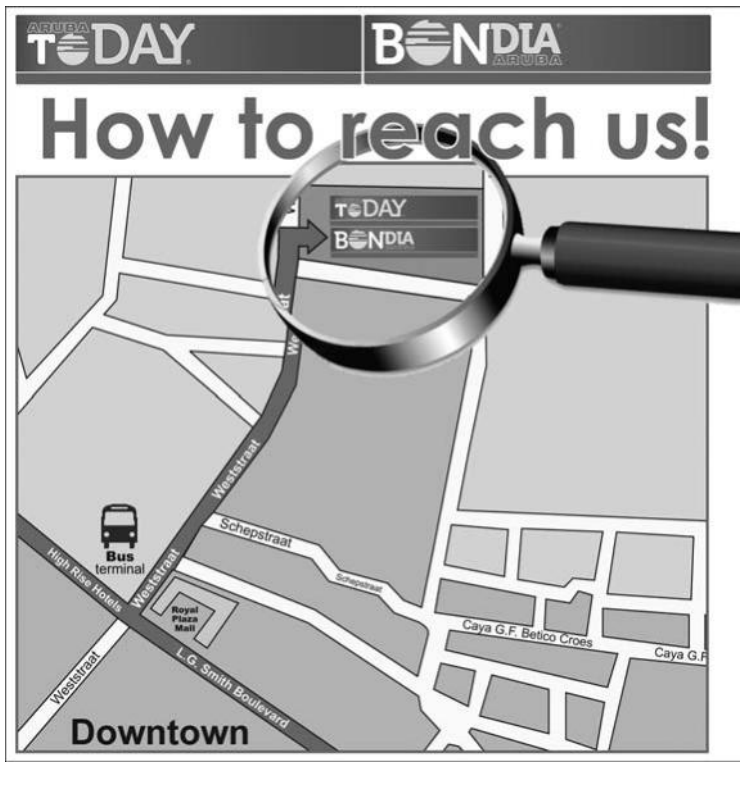
But 80 years later, the brand's parent company is halting sales of frozen juice concentrates in the U.S. and Canada, saying it wants to focus on the fresh juices that customers now prefer.

"We are discontinuing our frozen products and exiting the frozen can category in response to shifting consumer preferences," The Coca-Cola Co., which owns Minute Maid, said Wednesday in a statement.

Minute Maid's frozen juices including several varieties of orange juice, lemonade and limeade will be discontinued by April, with inventory available while supplies last, Coca-Cola said.

For generations, Americans who wanted orange juice without the work of squeezing fresh fruit cracked open a can and watched a cylinder of frozen juice go ker-plunk into a pitcher. The concentrated juice was mixed with water to make it ready for drinking.

In 1946, Vacuum Foods Corp. became the first U.S. company to ship frozen orange juice across the country, according to Coca-Cola. It named the product Minute Maid; Vacuum Foods eventually changed its name to Minute Maid as well. ❑



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General Info

Phone Directory Tel. 118

Derick Hall's strip-sack opens the way to Seahawks' second title

By ANDREW DESTIN
AP Sports Writer

SANTA CLARA, Calif. (AP) — The Seahawks had throttled the New England Patriots all game but still only managed a 12-0 lead when Derick Hall made the play that opened the way for Seattle to win its second Super Bowl.

The linebacker sacked Drake Maye in the third quarter and stripped the ball for a fumble that was recovered by Byron Murphy II. Five plays later, Seattle reached the end zone for the first time on a 16-yard touchdown catch by A.J. Barner on the way to a 29-13 victory Sunday.

It was the first turnover of the game and essentially helped Seattle put the game away. Hall finished with two sacks after getting only two all season.

"It's been a little bit of a crazy year for me," Hall said. "Obviously, the pressures and the hits have been there, but no sacks, and man, what a more rewarding time to be blessed and have opportunities there to go out in this game and help lead this team to success tonight."

New England Patriots quarterback Drake Maye (10) fumbles as he is sacked by Seattle Seahawks linebacker Derick Hall (58) during the second half of the NFL Super Bowl 60 football game, Sunday, Feb. 8, 2026, in Santa Clara, Calif.

Associated Press

For the 24-year-old Hall, to even play in his first Super Bowl let alone make it to the NFL was an impressive accomplishment in its own right. Hall was born four months premature in Gulfport, Mississippi, and was pronounced dead at birth without a heartbeat before being resuscitated.

Doctors believed Hall would likely be in a permanent vegetative state and advised his mother, Stacy Gooden-Crandle, to allow life support to be discontinued. But Gooden-Crandle refused, and Hall survived five months in an intensive care unit, frequent hospitalizations and intense asthma throughout his childhood.

He began playing flag football at 4 years old, and after a standout career at Gulfport High School was a star defensive end at Auburn.

"I started playing the game just to be able to get my lung capacity up. Just to be able to run around a little bit," Hall said. "I fell in love with the game. It allowed me to be a normal kid."

He was selected by the Seahawks in the second round of the 2023 NFL draft and quickly entrenched himself as a key cog in Seattle's defense. Less than three years after he was drafted, Hall was one of a number of standout defenders for the Seahawks as they dismantled the Patriots.

Shortly after the win, Gooden-Crandle tapped Hall on the shoulder so they could hug.❑

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Kicker, punter come up big for Seahawks in a Super Bowl devoid of early touchdowns

By KYLE HIGHTOWER
AP Sports Writer

SANTA CLARA, Calif. (AP) — During a defensive struggle in the first half, the Seattle Seahawks got the consistency and cushion they needed from their kicker.

Jason Myers connected on a Super Bowl-record five field goals, scoring the first 12 points of the game to help the Seahawks pull away for a 29-13 Super Bowl 60 victory on Sunday.

Myers connected on kicks of 33, 39, two from 41 and 26 yards. His 17 total points on five field goals and two extra points were also the most by a kicker in Super Bowl history.

"He's elite," holder and punter Michael Dickson said. "The attention that goes into the detail with him, it's really cool to see, and it pays off. And he's cool to be around. ... He's got that mentality, and it's really cool to share this experience with him."

The 34-year-old Myers, in his 11th NFL season and seventh with Seattle, became the first player to score 200 points in a season, playoffs included. He finished with 206 points, breaking LaDainian Tomlinson's record of 198 set in 2006.

Dickson said there should have at least been some discussion about Myers winning the Super Bowl MVP award, a honor that has never been bestowed upon a kicker. Running back Kenneth Walker III, who ran for 135 yards and added 26 receiving, was selected the game's MVP.

"We need multiple MVPs because K9, he went off," Dickson said of Walker. "He's incredible."

Seattle Seahawks kicker Jason Myers makes a 26-yard field goal during the second half of the NFL Super Bowl 60 football game against the New England Patriots, Sunday, Feb. 8, 2026, in Santa Clara, Calif.

Associated Press

The 30-year-old, Australian-born Dickson also helped put the Seahawks' defense in an advantageous position, dropping three punts inside the 6-yard line.

With Seattle hanging on to a 19-7 lead in the fourth quarter, Dickson had a 55-yard punt that was downed at the Patriots 4. New England's final drive of the game started at its 6 when Dickson booted a 52-yarder that went out of bounds.

"I mean, this week was no different to any other week in the year," said Dickson, in his eighth NFL season with the Seahawks. "So, you know, I always want to give my defense the best field position, and it's cool, you know, hitting it inside a few times, and getting the boys around me was special."❑

U.S. goalies out to justify the hype and Canada seeks to silence doubters at the Olympics

By STEPHEN WHYNO
AP Hockey Writer

MILAN (AP) — The top two favorites to win gold in men's hockey go into the Olympics with polar-opposite perceptions of their goaltending situations.

The U.S. arguably has one of the best trios in the tournament, with Connor Hellebuyck as the reigning NHL MVP, Jake Oettinger a clutch playoff performer and Jeremy Swayman in the midst of perhaps the best season of the three. Canada has more uncertainty, as Jordan Binnington has struggled back in North America and Logan Thompson and Darcy Kuemper have limited international experience.

There is no lack of confidence on either side of the border, though the narratives range from effusive praise to lingering questions. The Americans are out to justify the hype in net, while the Canadians seek to silence the doubters.

"We all know what we can do, and we're just excited to go out there and prove everyone wrong," Thompson said Monday. "You always hear it. Everyone always just says how they think the goaltending is the weakest part. I mean, it's been the word for the last couple of years. I don't see it that way. I don't think we see it that way. But for some reason everyone else does."

United States goalkeepers Connor Hellebuyck, Jake Oettinger, and Jeremy Swayman, gather on the ice during men's ice hockey practice at the 2026 Winter Olympics, in Milan, Italy, Sunday, Feb. 8, 2026.

Associated Press

Coach Jon Cooper was quick to point out that Binnington, Kuemper and Thompson all have a championship pedigree and have made big saves when needed. He dismissed the notion of Canada's goaltending being any kind of weakness.

"We have all the faith in the world in them," Cooper said. "To me, it's not a story. I don't know where it comes from."

Binnington, the starter when Canada won the 4 Nations Face-Off a year ago, has an .864 save percentage that ranks last among all NHL goalies with at least 30 games played this season. Thompson and Kuemper have better numbers, but they have combined for just three world championship appearances.

"You can't really listen to what people are saying, but we're all aware of how capable we are and confident in ourselves," Kuemper said.

"Just go out there and play and not be too worried about what people are saying. Just go do what you do."

All three have a Stanley Cup ring. Binnington backstopped St. Louis to its first title in 2019, Kuemper helped Colorado win in 2022 and Thompson was an All-Star midway through the season before getting hurt on the way to Vegas hoisting the Cup in 2023, with Adin Hill in the crease at the end.

While none of the U.S. goalies has won a Cup, all have had sustained success. Hellebuyck won the Vezina Trophy last year when Winnipeg was the top team in the NHL, Oettinger has taken Dallas to the Western Conference final three years in a row and Swayman in Boston bounced back in a big way from a rough 2023-24 season.❑

IOC open to earlier dates for future Winter Olympics and Paralympics because of warmer temperatures

By GRAHAM DUNBAR
AP Sports Writer

MILAN (AP) — Staging future Winter Games as early as January and the Paralympic Winter Games in February is a possibility because of the effects of warmer temperatures, the International Olympic Committee said Wednesday.

Every Winter Games medal was won in February since the 1964 Innsbruck Olympics opened Jan. 29, and moving to January would likely disrupt scheduling of storied World Cup races and events. It also would more directly clash with NFL and NBA schedules.

The IOC is now reviewing Olympic Games issues in the first year of Kirsty Coventry's presidency and changing the winter edition dates is an option.

"Maybe we are also discussing to bring the Winter Olympics a little bit earlier," the IOC member overseeing the sports program review, Karl Stoss, told reporters. "To do it in January because it has an implication for the Paralympics as well."

The Milan Cortina Paralympic Winter Games will be held March 6-15.

The IOC has long acknowledged under Coventry's predecessor Thomas Bach that changing climate is a challenge for finding future hosts and organizing competitions.

"(March) is very late because the sun is strong enough to melt the snow," said Stoss, whose home country Austria is a traditional power in Alpine skiing and ski jumping.

"Maybe the Paralympics will be in February and the other edition will be in January. That would also be a part of our discussion," he said on the sidelines of the IOC's eve-of-Olympics meeting in Milan.

The 100-plus IOC members met later Wednesday for another round of talks in the review program Coventry called "Fit For The Future."

Coventry said at a news conference "there are potentially going to be needs for us to look at adjustments of times," to schedule future Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games. "That might be a way if we bumped things forward."

IOC members are set to meet again in June to decide on the Olympic reviews, and whether to add new sports and events to the 2030 French Alps Winter Games. The French Alps edition is currently expected to run Feb. 1-17 and the 2034 Utah Winter Games from Feb. 10–26.❑

A worker blows snow off a path at the 2026 Winter Olympics, in Livigno, Italy, Wednesday, Feb. 4, 2026.

Associated Press

Discover the Best of Paseo Herencia Shopping

Paseo Herencia invites you to shop at an easy island pace in a charming open air setting, where international style meets local creativity. Browse fashion, fragrances, footwear, jewelry, skincare, and souvenirs all in one relaxed stroll.

Find well-known brands such as Tommy Hilfiger, Calvin Klein, Aldo, Carmen Steffens, and Psycho Bunny, then stop by Pandora to turn Aruba themed charms into keepsakes you can take home. For something truly one of a kind, explore locally handmade gifts and artwork at The Artist Co-op and Olla Gallery, where island inspired pieces and personalized options add a meaningful touch. Lumiere Candles adds to the local charm with Aruba inspired candles, perfect for bringing a little island warmth back home.

For a special accessory, discover permanent jewelry at Gloria Feliciana, crafted locally for everyday wear. For island wellness, Aruba Aloe offers locally made skincare and gifts created with aloe grown right here on the island. Beauty lovers can visit Maggy's for favorite beauty essentials and services for hair, nails, and makeup, perfect for a quick refresh before dinner or a night out.

A World of Flavors

Dining at Paseo Herencia fits every moment of the day, from breakfast to late night bites. Start at Che Bar, serving breakfast from 7:30 AM and continuing throughout the day with comforting favorites, including classic Neapolitan style pizza.

For bold traditional flavors, Xixon Spanish Restaurant is a go to for signature dishes such as paella paired with a wide wine selection. If you are craving something modern, Fusion Cuisine brings a creative twist with its original take on sushi. The Lazy Turtle offers comforting classics and craveable appetizers, while Sexy Shrimp adds a sports bar atmosphere to the mix, pairing standout drinks with a diverse menu that is perfect for gathering with friends and watching any game.

As the evening continues, follow your cravings. Enjoy Mexican favorites at Iguana Cantina, share Dutch specialties at Pomm's Frites, and finish with something sweet at Mythos or Mimo's roll up ice cream. Starbucks is always nearby for a familiar coffee or an easy refresh between stops.

VIP Cinema

Caribbean Cinemas VIP delivers a premium movie experience on the second floor, easily accessible by escalator.

Settle into plush reclining seats and enjoy high quality screens, state of the art projection, and immersive sound. A well stocked concessions counter offers classic popcorn, snacks, and drinks including wine, making it ideal for a laid back movie night or a special outing.

Location and Hours

Paseo Herencia is located in Aruba's high rise area, directly across from Holiday Inn. The mall is open Monday through Saturday from 10:00 AM to 10:00 PM, and on Sundays from 5:00 PM to 10:00 PM. For the latest updates and upcoming events, follow our social media pages and visit our website at www.paseoherencia.com.❑

Serena Williams acknowledges the crowd after losing to Ajla Tomljanovic, of Austrailia, iin the third round of the U.S. Open tennis championships, Sept. 2, 2022, in New York.

Associated Press

Serena Williams is eligible to return to tennis later this month. It's not clear if she will

By HOWARD FENDRICH
AP Tennis Writer

Serena Williams passed another stage on the path to a possible comeback to professional tennis, being listed Monday by the sport's drug-testing organization as eligible to return to competition on Feb. 22. That is six months after the 23-time Grand Slam singles champion initially registered with the International Tennis Integrity Agency.

Williams, who is 44, was listed on the ITIA website's reinstatement page Monday, a development first reported by Bounces.

What was not immediately known was when or where or, truly, whether Williams actually will play again.

When it was revealed last year that Williams had signed up with ITIA to return to the drug-testing pool, she wrote on social media: "Omg yall I'm NOT coming back. This wildfire is crazy."

Her agent did not immediately return a request for comment Monday. Neither did a spokesperson for the WTA Tour.

Last year, when word emerged that Williams had made an initial move required for a return, U.S. Tennis Association spokesman Brendan McIntyre said: "If Serena decides to return and compete at the professional level, together with her fans, we will enthusiastically welcome the return of one of the greatest champions in the history of our sport."❑